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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AIRGRAM

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TO : Department of State

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

MAY 13 1971

DATE: May 10, 1971

SUBJECT: INTERNAL SECURITY: Monthly Report of Incidents, April 1971

REF :

SUMMARY: April's 147 publicly reported incidents of violence with probable political motivation which includes 80 killings, was the highest in the past three years and well over March's already high figure. Reported South Coast violence was slightly higher than that in Guatemala City (which breaks past trend) and reports of violence in Eastern Departments were up significantly. (See comment for possible explanation.)

Security forces dealt several hard blows to subversive movement. Three important terrorists were killed, at least four safehouses exposed, and a number of arms caches discovered. Terrorist operations in the capital flared briefly in early April, then slackened. In the provinces the far Left was active throughout the month. On the South Coast there were reported six robberies, five cases of arson, two finca administrators murdered, and the explosions of a number of propaganda bombs.

Also, 12 bullet-ridden corpses were discovered on highways leading out of Guatemala City. The PR mayor of Jocotan was machinegunned to death, the fourth opposition mayor this year to die or disappear, and four other provincial officials were killed. Ten of the 80 persons killed throughout the country reportedly showed signs of torture.

Ironically, despite the dramatic increase in reported incidents of violence in April, the general level of tension appears not to have been affected markedly. This is attributable partially to the fact that those assassinated either were unknowns or well known as long-time activists. In two successive months now, terrorist forces suffered defeats. However, they still retain the capability to strike back.

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1. The Arana Administration dealt several hard blows to terrorist organizations this month, further disrupting their activities. The GOG announced that Army elements killed guerrillas Percy Amilcar JACOBS de Leon, Ricardo Alfredo AREVALO Bocaletti, and two brothers of the latter in an April 8 armed encounter on a San Marcos farm. Jacobs and Ricardo Alfredo Arevalo were important terrorists who had defected from the parent FAR organization in 1970. At noon, April 12, Rodolfo PAYERAS Solares, ex-guard of guerrilla leader Luis Augusto TURCIOS Lima, was killed in an exchange of gunfire in Zone 19. The GOG subsequently identified him as the FAR supply chief. Then on April 23, a radio patrol car investigating a group of suspicious youths, became engaged in a similar shoot-out. Two National Police detectives were wounded. One youth was captured who later lead security forces to four safehouses where a large quantity of weapons, ammunition, medical supplies, uniforms, and propaganda were found, including a portion of the Bureau of the Prison rifles stolen last February. The GOG issued extensive publicity on these successes. The subversive backgrounds of Jacobs and Arevalo appeared in the press as did photographs of the captured arms.

2. Assailants killed eight members of public and private security forces this month. Three hit-and-run attacks in the capital on April 5 and 6 resulted in three policemen killed and two wounded. Two more policemen were wounded in a machinegun attack April 11 on a Santa Rosa post. There were no injuries in a similar assault the same day in Esquintla. Ambushers used 9mm weaponry to kill a Treasury Policeman and a civilian companion April 12 in San Marcos. Old-time MLN security man Secundino GUDIEL was shot and killed in downtown Guatemala April 12 as were a private policeman making his rounds on April 18, retired Army officer Mario Rafael SANTOS (and his wife) April 27, and a reserve Army Lt. on April 29. In the last instance, however, a police source opined that the incident was non-political despite the usage of heavy caliber weapons (9mm and .45). Not included in the above statistics was the April 23 gun wound suffered by a bodyguard of MLN Deputy Olivario CASTANEDA; a Congressional security guard recently told an Embassy officer that the shooting was accidental.

3. South Coast farms continued to be hard hit by robberies, assassinations and fires. The media recorded 14 such incidents in April, many bearing the marks of the far Left. A large number of assailants machinegunned to death two San Marcos finca administrators during the month, leaving behind Communist propaganda. Six farm robberies in San Marcos, Esquintla, and Baja Verapaz netted holdup men Q7000. A seventh attempt in Esquintla was aborted by armed finca employees. In addition, a number of propaganda bombs exploded in Esquintla Department.

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4. The month was hard on mayors, military commissioners, and their assistants; there were 13 reported threats and assaults during April, although it is not possible to determine the degree of political motivation. The Revolutionary Party (PR) Mayor of Jocotan, Chiquimula, was machinegunned to death on April 16, the fourth opposition mayor to die or disappear this year. The Christian Democratic Mayor of San Jose, Esquintla, twice requested protection from President Arana due to continual death threats she has been receiving. A powerful bomb exploded in the front of the house of the MLN-PID mayor of Salama, Baja Verapaz. No personal injuries resulted. In addition, the following were killed: a Santa Rosa military commissioner, a San Marcos auxiliary commissioner and auxiliary mayors from Esquintla and Jalapa. Also, a military commissioner was wounded in Esquintla and a San Marcos assistant commissioner narrowly escaped an ambush. The mother of the missing PR mayor of Nuevo Progreso (San Marcos), kidnapped March 25, asked the President on April 5 to intensify the search.

5. Statistics this month included 12 bodies found along highways leading out of Guatemala City. Several remain unidentified, others were revealed as criminals or persons with leftist connections, and one was identified as a bookkeeper without known political ties. Of the total number of assassinations this month, 10 bodies reportedly bore marks of torture.

6. The press reported that two, year-old cases will be presented to the courts. Six prisoners were charged with involvement in the kidnappings of ex-Foreign Minister Alberto FUENTES Mohr and Embassy officer Sean Holly. The six named include four (Fausto Lorenzo DIAZ Paredes, Luis Alfredo CASTILLO de Leon, Jose Leon DIAZ Alvarado and Salvador DIAZ Lopez) who were arrested after the Holly kidnapping, and two others (Consuelo CARDONA and Pedro CHAJ Chic) picked up shortly thereafter on the basis of information provided by those captured earlier. The second case involves six individuals charged with the murder of MLN mayoralty candidate, David GUERRA Guzman in December, 1969. Several of those charged in this case were captured in a car bearing the same license plates as the attack car. This was the first notice that legal action was being prepared in the two cases. According to press accounts, the legal brief in the Guerra case alone is over 500 pages long.

COMMENT: The GOG mid-March prediction of a bloody April (and May) was realized, although the stated cause--the terrorist's defense of their last redoubts--does not appear to play a large part in the month's violence. The subversives, while making their presence known in propaganda bombs, security force assassinations, and at

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least a portion of South Coast finca incidents, appear to have been responsible for only a portion of the violence. They undoubtedly maintain the capability to pull off a spectacular incident, but they have not done so in the last several months, to a great extent because they are hurting from continued security force successes.

There is no clear explanation for the dramatic rise in reported incidents and deaths in April as compared with previous months. These monthly reports are compiled from published reports of incidents and as such are an imperfect, but useful, yardstick of the level of violence in the country based on a constant criteria. During the first four months of the State of Siege the Embassy graph fluctuated between 64 and 42 incidents a month of which an average of 34 per month involved deaths. In its CASP submission of March 12, 1971 (four months to the day after the beginning of the State of Siege) we estimated that "500 to 700 people may have died since November in political violence." If this estimate was correct, and we believe it was, then deaths were running at approximately 150 a month during the first four months of the State of Siege or some five times those reported in our monthly graph. The difference represented those killed, whose deaths were not publicly reported.

March was the first month which showed a marked increase in published incidents of violence (94 incidents as compared with the average of 52 during the previous four months). April represents an all time high. Since mid-March the Guatemalan Government has made a conscious effort to give more publicity to "successes" in the counter-guerrilla campaign.

As noted in the report, killings by the political Left do not account for the increase. The press which has been under varying degrees of restrictions from the inception of the State of Siege has been warned on several occasions to avoid dramatizing the violence. Some dailies, such as Prensa Libre, have downplayed incidents of violence. Others have been less restrained. But as a general rule it can be assumed that when a public incident occurs it will find its way into print. Hence, we can conclude that public incidents of violence increased markedly in April, but not necessarily the real total of political violence.

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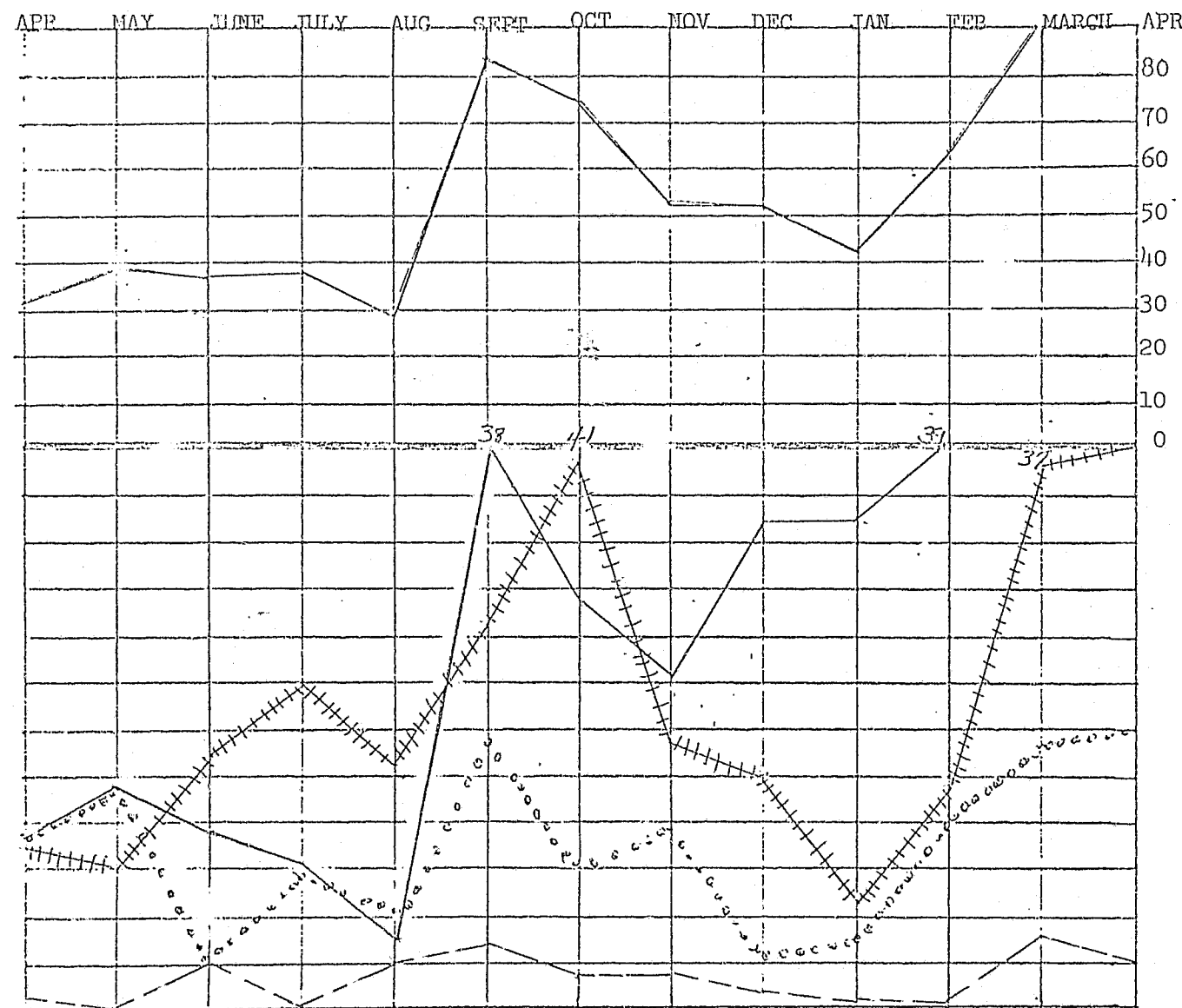
One possible explanation for the March-April increase in publicly reported violence may be the recent evidence that South Coast fisca owners are taking the law into their own hands. One MLN politician recently told an Embassy officer that Mano toughs from the East have been sent to the South Coast--primarily San Marcos Department--as hired guns. This may account, in part, for the increase in tortures and in the less discriminating hiding of the corpses of the victims.

DAVIS

A handwritten signature, possibly 'JD' or 'JDV', written in dark ink.

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MONTHLY FREQUENCY OF TERRORIST RELATED INCIDENTS BY REGION (1) - April 1970 - April 1971



Total - 147

South Coast-69 (3)
Capital 57 (2)

Eastern 18 (4)

Highlands 3 (5)

1. For purposes of this graph, acts of violence include shootings, bombings, and assassinated bodies.
2. Capital area: Sacatepequez, Guatemala
3. South Coast: San Marcos, Quezaltenango, Retalhuleu, Suchitepequez, Escuintla, Santa Rosa
4. Eastern Region: Jutiapa, El Progreso, Jalapa, Zacapa, Chiquimula, Izabal, El Peten.
5. Highlands: Totonicapan, Chimaltenango, Huehuetenango, El Quiche, Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz, Solola

Enclosure to Guatemala 7-81